

Cracks in the Concrete

ANTI-AUTHORITARIAN NEWS AND COMMENTARY

US troops attack passenger bus and kill at least five in Afghanistan

Early on April 12th, a passenger bus full of exclusively civilian passengers near the Afghan city of Kandahar pulled over to allow a US military convoy to pass. At that exact moment, another US military convoy opened fire at the bus, killing five and wounding eighteen. Every single window on one side of the bus was shot out. Some of the wounded are left in critical condition, and the death toll could rise.

It should be clear to anyone following the occupation of Afghanistan that this is a racist war on the Afghan people. This is far from the first and far from the last time US troops will indiscriminately slaughter civilians.

The perpetual terror that Afghan civilians are experiencing at the hands of the United States does not seem to evoke any empathy on television, in our newspapers and thus in our households. This lack of coverage and lack of interest in civilian casualties demonstrates how racist both this occupation and our nation's reaction to it really are.

Consider that if a passenger bus pulled over for police cars in a white suburban neighborhood in the US, and was then riddled with bullets killing members of your family and friends. A little more attention might be paid, to say the least.

The people of Kandahar responded by taking to the streets that Monday, burning tires, blockading a major road and protesting to make it clear that the United State's presence in their communities is not welcome. Repeated chants of "death to America" resounded throughout the area.

No matter what the mainstream news has told you, US troops are not welcomed as liberators, and the "support of the people" has not and will not be won. US troops are feared and hated for the terrorists that they continually demonstrate themselves to be.

Israeli journalist punished for exposing assassinations

The Israeli army has continued to capture and straight-up murder alleged Palestinian militants, despite a court ruling that has declared such killings illegal. What surprises us is not

continued on page 3



Photo: Associated Press

Citizens of Kandahar burn tires to blockade road during anti-American protest

Why do I cover the types of news that I do? Why am I news-oriented to begin with? While I'd love to continue collecting essays on theory and the latest trends of anarchist thought, because such things are indeed of interest to me, I am more inspired by the potential of relating to those not already accustomed to anarchist or radical subculture and thought. The news I report on are the stories people hear on television, just without the lies and whitewashed realities that prevent people from the natural reactions of sadness, anger and resentment.

Provoking the universal feelings of sadness, anger and resentment towards the real enemies is my overall interest. These feelings know no subculture or ideology.

Hopefully, through distributing other kinds of literature outside of this paper, I can offer further material for others to engage in anti-authoritarian thought and development. Unfortunately for some, though, I see an appeal in the very different types of strains within the anarchist movement that very different types of people will have the ability to relate to.

From the individualistic attitudes many relate to in the long-running anarchist journal *The Match*, to the more communalist and insurrectionary trends that permeate today's anarchist community as represented by publications like *Fire to the Prisons*, I am not trying to limit the types of literature I want to make available.

I have no interest in distinguishing myself as a proponent of any particular anarchist ideology. I have no interest in mimicking any aesthetic that would safely place me into a specific scene. People relate to and are inspired by different things, and I do not want to deny them this while denying myself the opportunity to work with a diverse range of people.

With that said, I attempt to analyze everything with a firm anti-authoritarian stance and accept it with that as a basis. It's just that, to me, this does not imply a need to pick between individualism and collectivism, syndicalism or primitivism, or any other imaginary dichotomy that many like to enforce. The specifics of anarchist organizing and anarchist community are not to be decided upon by me or anyone other than those directly affected and involved. This makes me, in the tradition of anarcho-feminist writer and poet Voltairine de Cleyre, an "anarchist without adjectives or prefixes." This may seem like a cop-out to many who identify strongly with particular ideologies, but to me it feels very much in accordance with the anarchist principal of *not telling others how to live their lives*.

Locally, lots of great things are brewing in Tucson and Arizona at large. This coming fall, a gathering will be held entitled "Decolonize Now" during which discussions and workshops will take place challenging settler privilege, supporting indigenous resistance, direct action techniques and more. Between proposed copper mines, further development on the San Francisco Peaks, struggles on Black Mesa, various issues surrounding the US/Mexican border, freeway construction west of Phoenix and much more, Arizona does not lack in struggles to support and participate in. I hope to see you down here come September!

-Luke Romano

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*Defining
what we
are about:*

*Anti-
authoritarianism:*

*Criticism of, and
resistance to, all
forms of authority,
hierarchy,
domination and
oppression.
Statism, capitalism,
colonialism, religion,
militarism, classism,
racism and sexism
are key examples of
what sits under this
umbrella.*

Anarchism:

*The theory and
practice of
organizing society
along the lines of
mutual aid,
cooperation and
free association.
The theory that all
forms of
government and
authority rest
on threats and
violence, and are
therefore harmful to
all living things, as
well as unnecessary.*

continued from page 1

that the Israeli army would kill people illegally, of course, but the continued persecution of journalists who manage to expose the blood thirsty behavior of the Israeli army. Well, okay, you got me. That doesn't surprise me either.

Twenty-three year old Anat Kam is accused of copying military documents that expose these unlawful assassinations and handing them over to a newspaper during her time in the Israeli military. As of April 18th, the time of this writing, she is awaiting trial scheduled for later this month.

Some people might call this kind of action "honesty," "bravery" or "duty to whatever decent qualities the human race still has got to say for itself." The Israeli military, however, is calling it "treason" and "espionage." An Israeli court has imposed a gag order barring media coverage of the case, and the genocidal occupation of Palestine continues.

Waste plant causes birth defects

Nearby residents of Fresno, California's Chemical Waste Management landfill have linked

the improper disposal of hazardous chemicals to eleven birth defects that have occurred since 2007.

On Thursday, April 8th the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that the landfill had violated federal laws on disposing PCBs. They have also "faulted" the plant for the birth defects. The plant is the largest hazardous waste facility in the western United States.

I wonder what actions are implied, if any, by "faulting" the facility, which local residents had been doing for years. Maybe in fifty years they'll enact a law that no one will follow.

Troops fire into crowd of thousands and kill 21 civilians

In Thailand, at least twenty-one civilians were killed and hundreds more wounded when police fired into a crowd of thousands who were protesting in Bangkok. The protests, called for by Thailand's "red-shirts," were calling for the Thai parliament to be dissolved and for a new election.

"There were no live bullets fired at protesters," said government spokesperson Panitan Wattanayagorn on national TV.

Paul, however, a British

teacher living in Thailand, told the BBC that he witnessed a 50 year old man get shot in the chest while waving a flag. Paul reported, "The army were firing live rounds. I wouldn't have believed it if I didn't see it myself."

Ironically, front page commentary in The Nation daily newspaper stated, "Yesterday's bloodbath is a wake up call to halt the slide towards anarchy."

If only anarchy was what this type of violence was sliding towards. The red-shirts (those calling for most mass protests in Thailand) are a loose coalition of leftist activists who support the exiled former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and want a new election. Thaksin was ousted in a military coup in 2006. I have yet to discover if there has been any anarchist presence on the streets during recent events.

In any case, the slaughter of civilians during this protest did not occur without resistance, as four police officers were killed during the unrest. Reports showed that civilians fired back and detonated explosive devices once the troops open-fired. Hopefully this sends the message to Thai military forces that firing live ammunition into a crowd of thousands is not safe for both civilians *and* for those initiating the violence.

Video leaked exposing troops shooting children, murdering civilians and laughing about it

During the first week of April, a video was released by Wiki Leaks depicting US troops gleefully killing twelve people and injuring at least two children in a suburb of Baghdad three years ago. The video is taken from a helicopter in which the troops shot down on civilians, including a father driving his two children to school.

Saleh Mutashar , the father



Thai protesters throw chairs at soldiers while troops fire live ammunition into crowd

just mentioned, was taking his two children, age nine and six at the time, to school when the attack occurred. Saleh was shot at and killed with both of his children in the car. The investigative team that released this video on Wiki Leaks visited Saleh's family to hear what they had to say about the military video.

Saleh's son, twelve-year-old Sajad Mutashar told them, "I want to get our rights back from the Americans who harmed us."

"What can we do? God take revenge from the Americans. They destroyed us and they destroyed our nations. What is the future of those children? They are orphans," stated Saleh's nephew Anwar.

Saleh's widow Ahlam Abdelhussain told the investigative team, "We used to live in a rented house. He worked as a construction worker. We didn't have any other income. After his death, I was left with nothing. My children were wounded. We were devastated. ...Life became very difficult. My children are still suffering from their wounds. My daughter still suffers from pain in her head and her stomach. My son is still in pain after his surgery."

We can hear in a clip from the video the soldiers in the helicopter hearing that a child was wounded from soldiers on the ground:

US Soldier 3: I've got eleven Iraqi KIAs. One small child wounded. Over.

US Soldier 1: Roger. Ah, damn. Oh, well.

US Soldier 3: Roger, we need, we need a- to evacuate this child. She's got a wound to the belly. I can't do anything here. She needs to get evacuated. Over.

US Soldier 1: Well it's their fault for bringing kids into a battle.

US Soldier 2: That's right.

There you have it. It's "their fault" for bringing their kids into a

"battle." From what I understand, however, a battle consists of two sides fighting each other, not a small handful of soldiers shooting at civilians from a helicopter.

This clip shows around eight Iraqis lying dead or badly wounded on the ground. The soldiers laugh about their successful killing:

US Soldier 1: We're still firing.

US Soldier 2: Roger.

US Soldier 1: I got 'em.

US Soldier 3: Two-six, this is two-six, we're mobile.

US Soldier 2: Oops, I'm sorry. What was going on?

US Soldier 1: God damn it, Kyle.

US Soldier 2: Sorry, hahahaha, I hit 'em- Roger. Currently engaging approximately eight individuals, KIA, RPGs and AK-47s. Hotel two-six, Crazy Horse one-eight.

US Soldier 1: Oh, yeah, look at those dead bastards.

US Soldier 2: Nice. Good shootin'.

US Soldier 1: Thank you.

In this clip we hear soldiers laughing as a Bradley tank drives over the dead body of an Iraqi civilian:

US Soldier 1: I think they just drove over a body.

US Soldier 2: Did he?

US Soldier 1: Yeah! [Ha ha ha]

There are number of other disturbing clips I could re-print here. Rather than continuing with the troubling video, I'll close this story up with a comment from Iraq War veteran Josh Steiber who was featured in an interview on *Democracy Now!* on April 12th. Josh Steiber was a part of the company involved in the shooting on the day exposed in the video, but refused orders a few days earlier and was left at the base. He has since left the military as a conscientious objector and joined the Iraq Veterans Against the War.

As myself and other

anarchists have been pointing out for quite some time, these instances of unrestrained violence are systemic, they are inherent in the functioning of the military, and they are not isolated incidents. One soldier finally agrees.

As Josh explained to the listeners of *Democracy Now!*, "Not to justify what they did, but militarily speaking, they did exactly what they were trained to do... If we're shocked by this video, we need to be asking questions of the larger system, because this is how these soldiers were trained to act."

Thank you, Josh, for validating, from the inside and probably without even knowing it, what we've been saying all along: Soldiers are trained to act like violent monsters. If you don't think soldiers should act like maniacs, then you don't want soldiers to exist at all. If you want things like this to stop happening, you have to be against the military in its entirety.

And just in case you were still wondering

Obama is not anti-war. He never was and sure as hell isn't now. In Afghanistan, new figures show that the number of civilians killed by US-led NATO troops has more than doubled this year. Seventy-two civilians have been killed during the first three months of 2010 alone, as opposed to the twenty-nine killed last year during the same period of time. Obama is in fact escalating Bush's wars and shows no signs of seriousness regarding troop withdrawal.

Indigenous Amazonians oppose Brazilian dam project

An \$11 billion dollar Belo Monte hydroelectric dam was approved for construction in Brazil earlier this year. If completed,

continued on page 6

DECOLONIZE NOW



SEPTEMBER 30 — OCTOBER 3

How do we actively engage in decolonizing? What does Indigenous support actually look like? What can we do to help the stories of Indigenous people reach an audience large enough to actually challenge colonizing oppression? Where do no border discussions fall into decolonizing discussions? After we listen and our hearts begin to call how do we take our passion and turn it into action? Please come to the desert this fall and share your stories that could shed light on these questions.

FOR MORE DETAILS PLEASE VISIT SURVIVALSolidarity.wordpress.com
TO REQUEST PRESENTING A WORKSHOP/DISCUSSION PLEASE E-MAIL SURVIVALSolidarity@gmail.com

Decolonization gathering near Chuk'shon late September

We encourage indigenous people and their allies to share ideas, strategies, stories and general presence at the gathering. This event is meant to bring people from all different areas together to help each other achieve our common goals.

Some of the discussions and workshops in the works are challenging settler privilege, supporting Indigenous resistance, direct action techniques, linking decolonization discussions to the militarization of Tohono O'odham/US/Mexico borders, self-defense, mixed martial arts, prisoner support, animal defense and communication/ support/accountability discussions.

Details regarding location are still in the works. They will be released closer to the actual gathering. If you would like to contribute in any way (i.e. cash, discussion topics, donations, food, ideas, stories to share, workshops,) please e-mail survivalsolidarity@gmail.com.

Regional projects and struggles...

Survival Solidarity:
www.survivalsolidarity.wordpress.com

Phoenix Class War Council:
www.firesneverextinguished.blogspot.com

O'odham Solidarity Across Borders:
www.oodhamsolidarity.blogspot.com

Black Mesa Indigenous Support:
www.blackmesais.org

No More Deaths:
www.nomoredeaths.org

Chaparral Respects No Borders:
www.chaparralrespectsnoborders.blogspot.com

Save the Peaks:
www.savethepeaks.org

Root Force:
www.rootforce.org

The Earth First! Journal:
www.earthfirstjournal.org

Peace Supplies:
www.peacesupplies.org

Save the Gloo Factory:
www.savethegloofactory.org

Dry River Infoshop (Tucson):
www.dryriver.org

The Catalyst Infoshop (Prescott):
www.catalystinfoshop.net

Taala Hooghan Infoshop (Flagstaff):
www.taalahooghan.org

continued from page 4

it will be the third largest hydroelectric dam in the world. The Brazilian government holds on to the dishonest claims that such a dam would be a “clean” source of energy to meet Brazil’s needs.

In reality, it will devastate tens of thousands of indigenous Amazonian residents and threaten wildlife in a number of ways. Indigenous activist Antonia Melo called for the project’s cancellation during a protest in front of the Brazilian environment ministry, “This project is economically, socially and environmentally unfeasible. Therefore, we are asking for it to be cancelled.”

As a possible point of interest for those otherwise unconcerned, the dam’s indigenous opponents have drawn the attention of the Hollywood film director James Cameron, whose recent film *Avatar* dealt with (in some questionable ways, of course) the global issues of colonialism and environmental destruction of indigenous land. Cameron took part in the recent protest in front of the Brazilian environment ministry, pointing out that the showdown over the dam mirrors the fictional struggle of the Na’avi to protect its homeland depicted in his film.

Colonialism and environmental destruction are not limited to issues paid attention to by Hollywood film directors, however. While we hope Cameron’s attention aids the indigenous Amazonian’s current struggle, we also hope Cameron and others see the link of those struggles to the very same realities here in the US, as the US government

is still actively colonizing and destroying indigenous land in our own backyard’s. Not to insinuate that Cameron is latching onto one token struggle to maintain an image, of course.

President Obama refuses responsibility for Israeli violence

During a statement delivered by President Obama on the status of peace talks between Israel and Palestine, he said that he is frustrated with the slow pace of negotiations. He continues the cowardly trend of pinning equal blame on both sides.

Obama said that, “...

billions of dollars of aid to Israel every single year. Obama made no mention of his government’s almost sole financial support of Israel, and made no mention of Israel’s refusal to halt settlement construction in occupied East Jerusalem.

This is called lying by omission. These kinds of lies are sometimes the biggest and most disastrous to the public mind.

Afghan prisoners detail torture and abuse at Bagram Prison

The secret US military Bagram prison in Afghanistan has been the site of hunger strikes and other forms of prisoner resistance in recent years. Recently, more



Afghan prisoners scuffle with prison guards at Guantanamo Bay in an act of resistance

we are not prepared to resolve this- these issues- no matter how much pressure the United States brings to bear. And the truth is, in some of these conflicts, the United States can’t impose solutions...”

Maybe Obama is right. Maybe he can’t impose peace. You know what the United States can do, though? It can *stop sending*

accounts of torture and abuse have been emerging as BBC news collects more testimonies. So far, nine testimonies report human rights violations at the Bagram military jail in the period since Obama took office.

One prisoner said that the secret facility is known as the “Black Hole.”

Some prisoners report being subjected to forced sleep deprivation, freezing temperatures, and other abuses.

One prisoner said he lost half a row of teeth after a US soldier struck him with the butt of a gun.

The same prisoner also recounted being forced to dance to music every time he needed to use the toilet.

Prisons will always be hubs of torture and abuse, so long as they exist. Need I mention any past prison sites that gained media attention? You can probably fill in the blanks. They are not isolated cases. US soldiers torture prisoners in Iraq and Afghanistan, just like guards torture prisoners in US prisons. It's in the nature of the institution. All prisons are useless, senseless and their abolition is necessary for a more humane world.

Cops surround and beat unarmed student without provocation

Once more, an example of cops doing what cops do best- beating the hell out of people- has emerged on video. In Maryland, three officers surrounded an unarmed student and took turns beating him with batons. The video shows clearly a man, who was dancing and celebrating the victory of the University of Maryland's men's basketball team, get charged from a distance by officers, slammed against a concrete wall, hurled to the ground and harshly beat by three cops with batons.

The attack was clearly unprovoked, for those who can believe their eyes above the lying testimonies of police and the media. The victim, John MnKenna, was

initially charged with assaulting the officers. Anyone who watches this video, however, would cringe at the thought of such a malicious lie. Those charges have been dropped due to the obviousness of what the video depicts.

As always, I have to point out that these unprovoked attacks are commonplace amongst police behavior. Those victims that are lucky enough to have their attacks caught on tape *might not* be found guilty of the charges the police make up to justify their sadistic fun. Most, however, are faced with a lifetime of being blamed for the violence that happened to them. As always, I must urge the necessity of working towards a world without cops.

Violent resistance to police is more than justified; it's a serious matter of self-defense.

Publications Available From Cracks in the Concrete:

Against Prisons- A brief introductory essay to the ideas of prison abolition by Catherine Baker. **\$1.**

Arguments from Errico Malatesta- Historical information about and reproduction of material by Italian anarchist and insurrectionist Errico Malatesta. **\$2.**

Black Anarchism- Ashanti Alston, who was a member of the Black Panthers and the Black Liberation Army, offers his view of a non-Eurocentric anarchism. Alston discovered anarchism while incarcerated for activities related to the BLA, and came out of prison with a perspective that challenged the hierarchical tendencies of the Black Panthers. **\$1.**

Communicating Vessels- A radical, anarchist-leaning literary zine out of Portland, OR. Stunningly produced by offset printers Eberhardt Press. Issue #21 currently available. **\$3.**

Dine, O'odham, Anarchist: Reflections on the DOA Bloc- On January 16, 2010, Diné, O'odham and Autonomous/Anti-authoritarian (DOA) people answered a call-out from the O'odham Solidarity Across Borders Collective and Phoenix Class War Council to form the DOA Bloc at a march against Sheriff Joe Arpaio in Phoenix, AZ. This zine reflects on, discusses and analyses the march, the DOA Bloc and the future of related struggles in AZ. Published by the Phoenix Class War Council. **\$1.**

Fire to the Prisons, Issue #7- An insurrectionary anarchist quarterly. FFTP reports on government repression, prisoner struggles, indigenous resistance, earth and animal liberation, and a variety of other forms of militant action. Contains a lengthy dose of insurrectionary and anti-political theory. **\$3.**

The Match!- We have a few copies of the latest issue of The Match! available. The Match! is one of the longest-running anarchist publications in the United States and is dedicated to the ideal of "Ethical Anarchism." Writer, editor and publisher Fred Woodworth documents police abuse and growing government bureaucracy while criticizing statism and religion, among other authoritarian institutions. **\$3.**

Olive Drab Rebels / Harass the Brass- Notes on the subversion of the US armed forces. Insight into the revolutionary but largely ignored and distorted history of the soldier anti-war movement. **\$2.**

Surviving Police Stops & Searches- Two articles in one zine looking at police stops and searches, offering tips and advice for surviving encounters with police. **\$3.**

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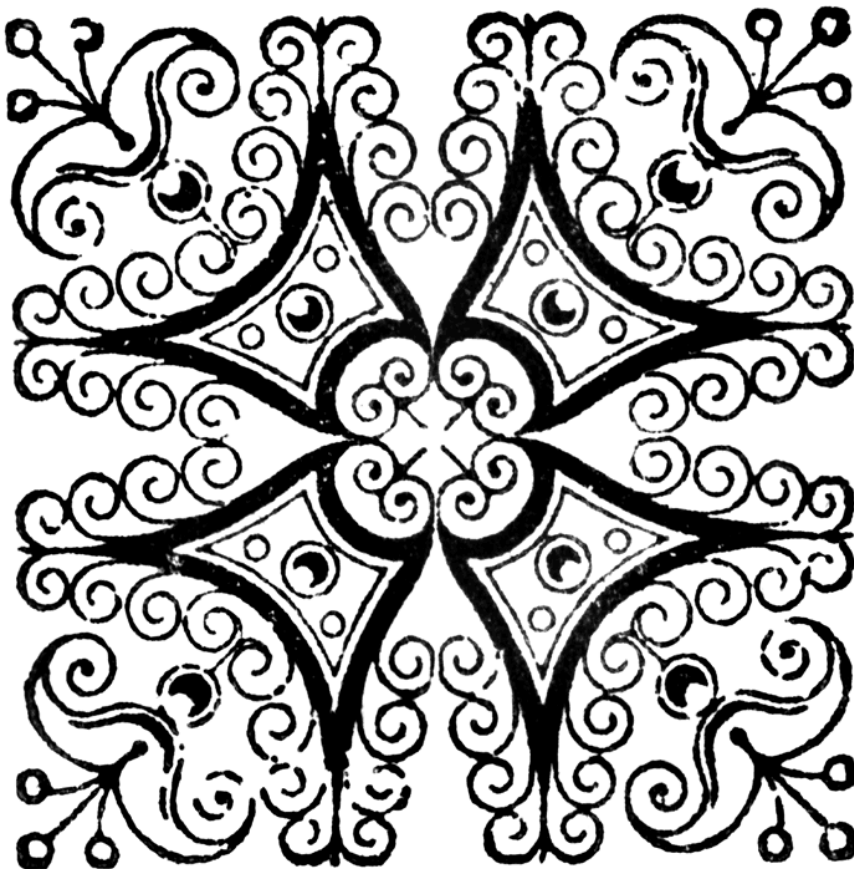
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A distinguishing factor of the anarchist idea of revolution is the importance of the individual in bringing this about. Although collectivist ideology has dulled this realization even in most anarchist circles, it still manifests in such choices as abstention from voting and military service. But for those seeking to develop an insurrectional practice, this realization needs to go much further than a few abstentions.

No revolutionary anarchist denies the necessity of a large-scale uprising of the exploited to destroy the state, capital and every institution of power and privilege. But revolution is not a gift that falls from the sky or is granted by an abstract History. Actions of individuals help to build the circumstance which can make uprisings occur and can push them in the direction of generalized revolt.

This means that rather than waiting around for the revolution like certain marxists, trying to read historical signs so that one will be ready, it makes more sense that we anarchists consider ourselves to be in revolt at every moment of our lives and attack this social order without worrying about whether “the time is ripe”. Individual acts of revolt which are easily repeated and imitated provide the basis for the development of forms of mass action in which the individual is not lost and delegation is absent — that is to say insurrectionary action that could destroy the present reality and open the possibility for creating a world in which every individual is able grasp all that they need to fully realize themselves.

-Wolfi Landstreicher, *Against the Logic of Submission*



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